



# Data Validator Project

Preliminary Six-Month Monitoring Report  
July 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018 Reporting Period

Prepared for the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families

June 30, 2019

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## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

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As part of the terms of the Settlement Agreement described in the case of *Andrew C. v. Raimondo*, the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families) must measure its performance on a number of outcomes designed to ensure that children in out-of-home care due to an allegation of abuse or neglect are placed in the most appropriate placement setting; that steps are taken to ensure each child's connection to his or her family is maintained; that foster homes are properly licensed and that background checks are completed for all household members; that reports of abuse or neglect are screened in, investigated and completed in a timely manner; and that case plans for children in out-of-home care are updated in a timely manner and contain the elements required by law.

This Settlement Agreement was filed on January 8, 2018, and describes not only the outcome measures on which DCYF is required to measure and report on an ongoing basis, but also the manner by which the accuracy, methodology, reliability and statistical validity of the measured outcomes can be verified by an independent Data Validator. DCYF has contracted with the Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG) to serve in that Data Validator role, starting with the first Reporting Period, July-December 2018. In addition, PCG and the Rhode Island Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) jointly comprise the "Monitoring Team" mandated by the Settlement Agreement; the role of that Monitoring Team is to report on DCYF's progress each Reporting Period, and to verify the validity of cases to be excluded from individual outcome measures at the request of DCYF.

During that first Reporting Period, the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) evaluated their performance across twenty performance measures in order to gauge their compliance with the terms of the Settlement Agreement. PCG conducted two separate evaluations for each of those twenty measures. A quantitative analysis of data provided by DCYF identified for the entire statewide universe of applicable cases (for example, children entering care during a period) whether DCYF met the criteria described in the Settlement Agreement; the results of this analysis were used to identify whether DCYF has met the threshold for compliance described in each Section of the Settlement Agreement.

Many of the measures outlined in the Settlement Agreement require that a qualitative case review be conducted for validation of the measure. These qualitative case reviews were conducted using either a data validation process or a case review instrument, dependent upon the measure. The data validation process for each measure consisted of selecting a random sample of 100 cases from the universe of eligible cases and reviewing the original case documentation in order to verify the accuracy of the data as it is recorded in RICHIST – Rhode Island's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System – to ensure that the data used to calculate the outcomes were valid. Case review instruments were used for validation of the measures where the data was not easily quantifiable or was not recorded electronically and were used for only six measures: Visitation 6.2 (quality of caseworker visitation), each of the four Licensing measures (7.1 through 7.4) and Case Planning 10.3 (case plan AACWA compliance). For these measures, PCG developed case review instruments to conduct the qualitative review of cases.

To facilitate these case reviews and the calculation of outcomes across each of the measures, DCYF supplied PCG with data files that were extracted and processed from the Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST) using syntax developed by DCYF. The first Reporting Period over which

DCYF's performance was evaluated was July 1 – December 31, 2018; reviews of outcomes achieved during that period were conducted by DCYF and PCG between January and June 2019. DCYF provided both the processed extracts and the syntax used to generate those extracts; for those measures for which preliminary analysis indicated that DCYF might achieve the threshold for compliance described in the Settlement Agreement, PCG accompanied DCYF staff in generating and transmitting the data extracts in order to ensure that the represented the true and complete extract of the processing scripts.

A summary of each of the measures subject to PCG review is included as Figure 1, below.

Outcome Measure	Target Outcome	Reporting Period 1 Outcome
<b>Assessments 1.1:</b> Assessments to be completed for children entering care or changing placements	85.00%	89.13%
<b>ASC Placements 2.2:</b> No child to be placed in ASC	100.00%	100.00%
<b>ASC Placements 2.3a:</b> ASC placements 14+ days have QR every 14 days	90.00%	100.00%
<b>ASC Placements 2.3b:</b> ASC placements 60+ days have approval	95.00%	100.00%
<b>Congregate Care 3.1:</b> No child to be placed in congregate care	90.00%	95.56%
<b>Congregate Care 3.2:</b> Congregate placements 90+ days get reviews every 45 days, with step-down provisions.	90.00%	94.67%
<b>Sibling Placement 4.1:</b> Siblings placed together	80.00%	73.33%
<b>Visitation 6.1:</b> Monthly caseworker face-to-face visits	95.00%	94.13%
<b>Visitation 6.2:</b> Quality of face-to-face visits	85.00%	16.76%
<b>Visitation 6.3b:</b> Frequency of sibling visitation	85.00%	3.28%
<b>Visitation 6.4b:</b> Frequency of parent visitation (reunifications)	85.00%	12.62%
<b>Licensing 7.1:</b> Non-kinship placements must be licensed	100.00%	100.00%
<b>Licensing 7.2:</b> Background checks required for kinship homes	100.00%	70.83%
<b>Licensing 7.3:</b> Kinship applications completed within six months	95.00%	15.25%
<b>Licensing 7.4:</b> Background checks completed within 30 days of license renewal due date	85.00%	23.29%
<b>CPS 8.1:</b> Timely screening of reports of abuse/neglect	90.00%	96.48%
<b>CPS 8.2:</b> Response within designated timeframes	90.00%	77.76%
<b>CPS 8.3:</b> Investigations completed within designated timeframes	85.00%	84.35%
<b>Case Planning 10.2:</b> Case plans meet timeliness requirements	80.00%	12.86%
<b>Case Planning 10.3:</b> AACWA elements in case plan	80.00%	4.74%

Figure 1: July-December 2018 Reporting Period Statewide Outcomes

PCG conducted an review of the code used to derive the results in this report in early 2019. The syntax review consisted of an analysis of the database extraction code, the syntax used to derive case exclusions and evaluate outcomes, and the sample size and methodology used to calculate the percentages reported and whether they align with the criteria outlined in the Settlement Agreement. PCG's review did not uncover any irregularities in any of the syntax used to calculate the percentages for any of the measures.

This report details the results of PCG's analysis of each of the twenty measures across eight domains for the July-December 2018 Reporting Period which serve to measure DCYF's compliance with the terms of the settlement agreement.

## DOMAIN #1: ASSESSMENTS

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 1 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which the Department conducts assessments for children entering out-of-home care due to a report of suspicion of abuse or neglect, or who change placement settings subsequent to a removal due to a report of suspicion of abuse or neglect. These assessments must be conducted within 30 days of the removal from the home; upon a change in placement, the assessment must be conducted between 60 days prior to the placement change and fourteen days following the placement change.

Four exceptions to this requirement are outlined in the Settlement Agreement:

- a) the placement move is to a placement setting that serves an equivalent level of need;
- b) the placement change occurs because the placement is no longer available for reasons unrelated to the changing needs of the child;
- c) the placement change is occurring to a child not in DCYF legal custody due to a report or suspicion of abuse or neglect, or the child is open to DCYF as a juvenile justice case and the placement change occurs due to juvenile justice or behavioral health reasons; or
- d) the placement change is occurring due to an order of the Rhode Island Family Court.

One outcome measure is described in the Settlement Agreement:

**Assessments 1.1:** Children entering care or changing placements during the Reporting Period, excepting entries or placement changes falling under one of the four “exceptions” described above, must receive an assessment within the designated timeframes. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 85 percent of removals and placement changes.

After attaining the goal described above for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 1 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Assessments 1.1: All children removed/changing placements will be assessed.

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 570 instances of a child being removed from the home or changing placement settings during the Reporting Period, excluding those placement changes between placements that serve equivalent levels of need. In 510 of those removals/placement changes, DCYF conducted an assessment of the child’s needs.

Eighteen records involved a child experiencing more than one placement change within a short period of time, and a single assessment being conducted within the designated timeframes for each of the placement changes; those were “unduplicated” so that each assessment would only be counted as a single successful assessment, leaving 552 removals and placement changes in the statewide universe.

Of the 552 remaining removals and placement changes, DCYF conducted an assessment within the designated timeframe for 492 removals and placement changes, resulting in a statewide outcome of

89.13 percent. This exceeds the 85 percent threshold described in the Settlement Agreement; should DCYF exceed that 85 percent threshold during the second Reporting Period (January-June 2019), the Department will be able to exit from Section 1 of the Settlement Agreement.

#### Case Reviews

PCG identified a random sample of 100 removals or placement changes, and conducted a case review in order to verify that assessments were conducted within the timeframes mandated in the Settlement Agreement. In each of the cases reviewed, PCG found that an assessment was conducted within the designated timeframe.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 552 eligible cases statewide, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 removals/placement changes (representing 18.1 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 10.6$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

#### Assessments 1.2: Exceptions to Section 1.1

Section 1.2 of the Settlement Agreement describes the exceptions to DCYF's obligations under Section 1.1 (as summarized in the previous section of this report), and does not include a requirement to calculate outcomes at the statewide level.

#### Assessments 1.3: Children Unavailable for Assessment

Section 1.3 of the Settlement Agreement describes the circumstances under which the requirement to conduct an assessment may be waived if the child is unavailable – for example, due to the child's runaway status, placement in a psychiatric hospital, or placement out of state. DCYF did not identify any children during the Reporting Period whose assessment was delayed due to the unavailability of the child.



## DOMAIN #2: PLACEMENT IN ASSESSMENT & STABILIZATION CENTERS

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 2 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which the Department minimizes the number of children placed in shelters or “assessment and stabilization centers” (ASCs). As described in the Settlement Agreement, no child should be placed in an ASC unless:

- a) the child has a demonstrated need for placement in an ASC;
- b) the placement is an emergency removal, immediate removal from the home is necessary and the ASC placement is in the best interest of the child, per the professional judgement of the DCYF caseworker; or
- c) the placement at an ASC is due to an order of the Rhode Island Family Court

For those children who are placed in an ASC, DCYF is responsible for conducting a review of the child’s continued placement at least every 14 days until the child is discharged from the ASC; when a child is placed in an ASC longer than 60 days, DCYF must have documented approval for the continued placement from the DCYF Director or her designee.

Three outcome measures are described in the Settlement Agreement:

**ASC 2.2:** Placements during the Reporting Period into an ASC must be for one of the three “exception” reasons described above. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 100 percent of ASC placements (that is, all ASC placements must be for one of the three “exception” reasons.

**ASC 2.3a:** Children placed into an ASC must have the appropriateness of that continued placement reviewed by DCYF at least every 14 days. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 90 percent of ASC placements longer than fourteen days.

**ASC 2.3b:** Children placed into an ASC for longer than 60 days must have the written approval of the Director or her designee for the continued placement. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 95 percent of ASC placements longer than 60 days.

After attaining all three of the goals described above for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 2 of the Settlement Agreement.

### ASC 2.2: No placements in ASCs

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 68 children who were placed in an ASC during the Reporting Period. Of those, 21 ASC placements pre-dated the Reporting Period, and were excluded from the calculations. In each of the remaining 47 cases, DCYF had an “exception” reason documented for the placement, resulting in a statewide outcome of 100 percent. This meets the 100 percent threshold described in Section 2.2 of the Settlement Agreement.



### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of each of the 47 placements into an ASC during the period in order to verify that the “exception” justifying the ASC placement was appropriately documented within RICHIST. In each of the 47 cases, PCG found that DCYF had appropriately documented the reason for the placement.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 47 ASC placements occurring statewide during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG reviewed the full universe of cases, the statistical validity of PCG’s case review did not need to be calculated.

## ASC 2.3a: Reviews for 14-day ASC placements

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 68 children who were placed in an ASC at any point during the Reporting Period, including 21 placements pre-dating the Reporting Period; since Section 2.3a of the Settlement Agreement described DCYF’s obligations to continue reviewing the appropriateness of ASC placements on an ongoing basis, these 21 ASC placements were not excluded on this measure.

Sixteen ASC placements did not last longer than 14 days, however, and those sixteen episodes were excluded from the statewide calculations. In each of the remaining 52 cases, DCYF conducted a review at least every 14 days, resulting in a statewide outcome of 100 percent. This exceeds the 90 percent threshold described in Section 2.3a of the Settlement Agreement.

### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of each of the 52 placements of longer than fourteen days in an ASC which overlapped any point of the Reporting Period in order to verify that DCYF conducted reviews of the appropriateness of the continued placement at least every fourteen days. In each of the 52 cases, PCG found that DCYF had conducted such a review and documented the review correctly.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 52 ASC placements of longer than fourteen days in an ASC which overlapped any point of the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG reviewed the full universe of eligible cases, the statistical validity of PCG’s case review did not need to be calculated.

## ASC 2.3b: Approval for 60-day ASC placements

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 30 children who reached their 61<sup>st</sup> day of placement in an ASC during the Reporting Period. Since DCYF’s obligations under during the first Reporting Period did not take effect until July 1, 2019, that date represented the start of the 60-day timer to obtain Director approval for these ASC placements. Of the thirty ASC placements identified, ten discharged on or prior to August 29, 2019 (60 days after July 1, 2019) and were excluded from this measure. In each of the remaining twenty cases, DCYF obtained written approval from the Director or her designee on or prior to the later of August 29, 2019 or the child’s 60<sup>th</sup> day of placement in the ASC. The statewide outcome on this measure during the

first Reporting Period is 100 percent, exceeding the 95 percent threshold described in Section 2.3a of the Settlement Agreement.

#### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of each of the 30 placements in an ASC reaching their 61<sup>st</sup> day during the Reporting Period in order to verify that written approval from the Director or her designee was documented. This case review included the ten cases where the child reached their 61<sup>st</sup> day in the ASC placement during the period, but discharged on or prior to August 29, 2019, and which were excluded from the calculation of the statewide outcomes. In each of the 30 cases (including all 20 cases evaluated as part of the statewide outcome), PCG found that DCYF had obtained the approval of the DCYF Director or her designee on or before the later of August 29, 2019 or the child's 60<sup>th</sup> day of placement in the ASC.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 20 ASC placements reaching their 61<sup>st</sup> day during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG conducted a case review on all eligible cases, the statistical validity of PCG's case review did not need to be calculated.

## DOMAIN #3: PLACEMENT IN CONGREGATE CARE

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 3 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which the Department minimizes the number of children placed in congregate care settings. As described in the Settlement Agreement, no child should be placed in a congregate care setting unless:

- a) the child has treatment needs which necessitates placement in a congregate care setting; or the child has needs that cannot be addressed in a family-like setting;
- b) the child is awaiting step-down from congregate care to an appropriate family-like setting;
- c) the placement is an emergency removal, immediate removal from the home is necessary and the placement in a congregate care setting is in the best interest of the child, per the professional judgement of the DCYF caseworker and DCYF is working to identify a placement in an appropriate family-like setting; or
- d) the placement at a congregate care setting is due to an order of the Rhode Island Family Court.

For those children who are placed in a congregate care setting for 90 days or longer, DCYF is responsible for conducting a review of the child's continued placement at least every 45 days until the child is discharged from the congregate care setting. When a determination is made that a step-down to a more appropriate level of placement is warranted, DCYF will make that step-down within 30 days of the determination. Where the child is not placed into a family-like setting within that 30-day timeframe, the case must be reviewed by the Associate Director of the Permanency Division (or his/her designee) every fifteen days following the 45<sup>th</sup> day after which the step-down decision was made.

Two outcome measures are described in the Settlement Agreement:

**Congregate Care 3.1:** Placements during the Reporting Period into a congregate care setting must be for one of the four "exception" reasons described above. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 90 percent of ASC placements (that is, 90 percent of congregate placements must be for one of the four "exception" reasons.

**Congregate Care 3.2:** Children placed into a congregate care setting for 90 days or longer must have the appropriateness of that continued placement reviewed by DCYF at least every 45 days. DCYF must conduct these reviews in 90 percent of congregate care placements lasting 90 days or longer.

After attaining each of the goals described above for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 3 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Congregate Care 3.1: No children placed in congregate setting unless exception documented

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 45 children who were placed in a congregate care setting during the Reporting Period, excluding children placed into an Acute Residential Treatment Services (ARTS) setting. In 43 of those 45 cases, DCYF documented an "exception" reason for the placement, resulting in a statewide outcome of 95.56 percent. This exceeds the 90 percent threshold described in Section 3.1 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of each of the 45 eligible placements into a congregate care setting during the period in order to verify that the “exception” justifying the placement was appropriately documented within RICHIST. In each of the 45 cases, PCG found that DCYF had appropriately documented the reason for the placement.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 45 placements into a congregate care setting occurring statewide during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG did not review a sample of cases, the statistical validity of PCG’s case review did not need to be calculated.

## Congregate Care 3.2: Reviews of 90+-Day Congregate Care Placements

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 75 children who reached their 90<sup>th</sup> day of placement in a congregate care setting during the Reporting Period, or who had been placed in a congregate care setting for at least 90 days as of the first day of the Reporting Period. In 71 of those 75 cases, DCYF conducted a review of the appropriateness of that continued placement at least every 45 days following the 90<sup>th</sup> day of placement. The statewide outcome for this measure is 94.67%, exceeding the 90 percent threshold described in Section 3.2 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Case Reviews

Of the 75 cases involving a child who reached their 90<sup>th</sup> day of placement in a congregate care setting during the Reporting Period, or who had been placed in a congregate care setting for at least 90 days as of the first day of the Reporting Period, PCG reviewed the 71 cases identified by DCYF as having achieved a successful outcome on this measure – that is, that DCYF had conducted a review of the appropriateness of the continued placement at least every 45 days following the 90<sup>th</sup> day in the congregate placement. PCG found that DCYF had conducted the reviews every 45 days as required in each of the 71 cases.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 75 placements into a congregate care setting occurring statewide during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG did not review a sample of cases, the statistical validity of PCG’s case review did not need to be calculated.

## DOMAIN #4: SIBLING PLACEMENTS

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 4 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which siblings<sup>1</sup> who enter out-of-home care within 30 days of each other, or whose placement changes, are placed in the same placement setting. As described in the Settlement Agreement, siblings entering care or who change placements should be placed together unless:

- a) DCYF determines that co-placement would be harmful and/or not in the best interest of at least one sibling;
- b) at least one of the siblings has treatment needs that necessitate placement in a specialized facility;
- c) the size of the sibling group makes co-placement impossible due to licensing regulations;
- d) it is in the best interest of at least one sibling to be placed into a kinship setting in which the other siblings can not be placed; or
- e) a specific placement is due to an order of the Rhode Island Family Court

One outcome measure is described in the Settlement Agreement:

**Sibling Placement 4.1:** Siblings removed or changing placements during the Reporting Period must be placed in the same setting unless one of the five “exception” reasons described above applies. DCYF must draw a random sample of eligible “events” to review (siblings entering care, or a change in placement for at least one member of a sibling group in care), and must achieve a successful outcome in 80 percent of reviewed cases.

After attaining the goal described above for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 4 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Sibling Placement 4.1: Siblings Placed Together

#### Review of Sampling Syntax and Statewide Sample

DCYF pulled a random sample of 80 cases in which siblings entered care during the period, or were placed during the period and the placement setting of at least one sibling changed. This random sample was stratified by DCYF Region, and each case was reviewed by a member of the DCYF Quality Review (QR) team in order to identify (a) whether an “exception” to the Settlement Agreement requirements applied to the siblings; and if not (b) whether the siblings were placed together.

DCYF documented 35 cases in which a valid “exception” existed to the requirement that the siblings be placed together; of the remaining 45 cases, DCYF found that in 33 cases (73.33%) the siblings were placed together upon their entry into out-of-home care or the placement change of at least one sibling. This statewide outcome of 73.33 percent falls short of the 80 percent threshold described in Section 4.1 of the Settlement Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this measure, “siblings” are defined as children who have at least one parent in common through birth or adoption, and who lived together immediately prior to placement.

### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of each of the 33 cases where DCYF (a) did not note that an “exception” to the requirements of the Settlement Agreement applied, and (b) found that the siblings had been placed together. In each of the 33 cases reviewed, PCG verified that the siblings were placed in the same setting upon their removal from the home or placement change.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for 80 of 151 eligible cases statewide (representing 52.98 percent of the statewide universe); this sample is statistically valid at a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of error of  $\pm 7.5$  percent. PCG’s second level review was conducted against each of the 33 “successful” cases; since PCG did not review a random sample of cases, the statistical validity of PCG’s case review did not need to be calculated.

## DOMAIN #5: CASE MANAGEMENT

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 5 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is tasked with attaining casework goals as described in the areas of visitation (Section 6 of the Settlement Agreement) and case planning (Section 10).

No additional outcome measures – beyond those described in Sections 6 and 10 – are defined in Section 5 of the Settlement Agreement.

DCYF will utilize the results from the first Reporting Period to establish a baseline of current DCYF compliance with the case plan content and timeliness elements evaluated under the terms of Section 10 of the Settlement Agreement. Starting with the second Reporting Period (January-June 2019), should DCYF not attain the commitments outlined in Sections 6 and 10 in two consecutive periods, DCYF will be responsible for conducting a workload study in consultation with the Monitoring Team.



## DOMAIN #6: VISITATION

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 6 the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which children in out-of-home care are visited by caseworkers on a regular basis; that those visits appropriately assess issues pertaining to the safety, permanency and well-being of the children; and that visits between siblings in care, and between children in care and their parents for cases with a goal of reunification, occur as often as described in the case plan.

Four outcome measures are described in the Settlement Agreement:

**Visitation 6.1:** Each full calendar month that a child is in out-of-home placement, they should experience at least one face-to-face visit with a member of the DCYF Care Team. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 95 percent of full calendar months that children are in out-of-home care.

**Visitation 6.2:** Children in out-of-home care during the Reporting Period must have visitation that meet the federal Child & Family Services Review (CFSR) criteria to be rated as a “strength” in terms of frequency and quality. DCYF must draw a random sample of eligible cases to review, and must achieve a successful outcome in 85 percent of reviewed cases.

**Visitation 6.3b:** Siblings in out-of-home care during the Reporting Period must have visitation between the siblings which occurs at the frequency indicated in their case plans. DCYF must draw a random sample of eligible cases to review, and must achieve a successful outcome in 85 percent of reviewed cases.

**Visitation 6.4b:** Children in out-of-home care during the Reporting Period for whom the case plan goal is reunification must have visitation with their parents that occurs at the frequency indicated in their case plans. DCYF must draw a random sample of eligible cases to review, and must achieve a successful outcome in 85 percent of reviewed cases.

Upon attaining the goals described for Visitation 6.1 for two consecutive Reporting Periods, DCYF shall exit from the terms of the Settlement Agreement for that measure. Similarly, upon attaining the goals described for Visitation 6.2 for two consecutive Reporting Periods, DCYF shall exit from the terms of the Settlement Agreement for that measure.

The Visitation 6.3b and Visitation 6.4b are incorporated into Section 10 of the Settlement Agreement (Case Planning), and the criteria for DCYF’s exit from the terms of the Settlement Agreement for those measures are described in the “Domain #10: Case Planning” section of this report.

### Visitation 6.1: Caseworker Face-to-Face Visits with Children

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 2,502 children who were in care at least one full calendar month during the Reporting Period, spanning 9,880 full calendar months. In 9,300 of those months, the child in care experienced at least one face-to-face visit with a member of the DCYF Care Team, resulting in a statewide outcome of

94.13 percent. This outcome falls short of the 95 percent threshold described in Section 6.1 of the Settlement Agreement.

#### Case Reviews

PCG identified a random sample of 100 children placed for at least one full calendar month during the Reporting Period, and conducted a case review in order to verify that DCYF had appropriately documented that the face-to-face visit occurred with the child during each full calendar month that the child was in care during the Reporting Period. In each of the 100 cases reviewed, PCG found that visitation was appropriately documented.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 2,502 eligible cases statewide, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 children in care for at least one full calendar month during the Reporting Period (representing 4.0 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 10.0$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

### Visitation 6.2: Quality of Face-to-Face Visits

#### Review of Sampling Syntax and Statewide Sample

DCYF pulled a random sample of 173 cases of children in care at any point during the first three months of the period. This random sample was stratified by DCYF Region, and each case was reviewed by a member of the DCYF Quality Review (QR) team in order to evaluate whether the quality of the visits meets the criteria used for the federal CFSR to rate as case as a "Strength."

This methodology excluded children entering care during the final three months of the period; while PCG agrees with DCYF's decision to exclude from the sample those children who were not in care long enough for a case plan to be developed during the period, the timeframe for developing that case plan is sixty days. DCYF has agreed in future Reporting Periods to include all children served through the first four months of each Reporting Period, rather than the first three months.

Of the 173 cases, 29 cases (16.76%) were rated as a "strength." This outcome falls short of the 85 percent threshold described in Section 6.2 of the Settlement Agreement.

#### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a second-level review of 20 percent of the 173 cases reviewed by DCYF (35 cases), and evaluated the quality of visitation using the same federal CFSR instrument and case review criteria employed by the DCYF Quality Review Team. The purpose of this case review was to verify the findings of the DCYF review; of the 35 cases subject to this second-level review, eight had been rated as a "strength" by the DCYF Quality Review team, and 27 had been rated as an "area needing improvement." In each of the 35 cases reviewed, PCG agreed with the rating assigned by the DCYF Quality Review team.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for 173 of the 1,751 eligible cases statewide (representing 9.88 percent of the statewide universe); this sample is statistically valid at a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of

error of  $\pm 7.8$  percent. PCG's second-level review of 33 cases is statistically valid at a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of error of  $\pm 16.9$  percent

### Visitation 6.3b: Sibling Visitation

#### Review of Sampling Syntax and Statewide Sample

DCYF pulled a random sample of 61 cases (of 251 total statewide) involving siblings in care at any point during the first three months of the period. This random sample was stratified by DCYF Region, and each case was reviewed by a member of the DCYF Quality Review (QR) team in order to evaluate whether visitation between the siblings occurred at (at minimum) the frequency described in the siblings' case plan.

This methodology excluded siblings entering care during the final three months of the period; while PCG agrees with DCYF's decision to exclude from the sample those sibling groups who were not in care long enough for a case plan to be developed during the period, the timeframe for developing that case plan is sixty days. DCYF has agreed in future Reporting Periods to include all sibling groups served through the first four months of each Reporting Period, rather than the first three months.

Of the 61 cases reviewed, two cases (3.28%) were found to have visitation that occurred at least as often as what was stipulated in the siblings' case plan. In addition to cases where visitation did not occur at the frequency recommended in the case plan, cases where the appropriate frequency of visits between siblings was not specified in the case plan were also counted as non-compliant on this measure. This outcome falls short of the 85 percent threshold described in Section 6.3b of the Settlement Agreement.

DCYF conducted an additional review of 25 non-compliant cases in order to identify the reasons for non-compliance; in 15 cases (60%), the required frequency of visitation was stipulated in the case plan. In the remaining 10 cases, the frequency of visitation was not described in the case plan; in two of those ten cases, reviewers found that frequency between/among the siblings did occur at a frequency that was consistent with the professional judgement of the reviewer.

#### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a second-level review of the two cases where DCYF found that sibling visitation occurred at the frequency indicated in the case plan, and evaluated whether that visitation did occur; in both cases, PCG found that visits between the siblings occurred at the indicated frequency.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for 61 of the 251 eligible cases statewide (representing 24.30 percent of the statewide universe); this sample is statistically valid at a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of error of  $\pm 10.94$  percent. PCG's second level review of the two "successful" cases was not statistically valid.

## Visitation 6.4b: Parent-Child Visitation

### Review of Sampling Syntax and Statewide Sample

DCYF pulled a random sample of 103 cases (of 1,030 total statewide) involving children in out-of-home case with a goal of reunification. This random sample was stratified by DCYF Region, and each case was reviewed by a member of the DCYF Quality Review (QR) team in order to evaluate whether visitation between the child and parent occurred at at least the frequency required in the child's case plan, excepting cases where parents are not attending visits despite DCYF employing measures to ensure the parents' ability to participate in the visit.

This methodology excluded children entering care during the final three months of the period; while PCG agrees with DCYF's decision to exclude from the sample those children who were not in care long enough for a case plan to be developed during the period, the timeframe for developing that case plan is sixty days. DCYF has agreed in future Reporting Periods to include all children served through the first four months of each Reporting Period, rather than the first three months.

Of the 103 cases reviewed, thirteen cases (12.62%) were found to have visitation between the parent and the child that occurred at least as often as what was required by the case plan. Similar to measure 6.3b, cases where the appropriate frequency of visits between the parent and child was not specified in the case plan were also counted as non-compliant on this measure. This outcome falls short of the 85 percent threshold described in Section 6.4b of the Settlement Agreement.

DCYF conducted an additional review of the 90 non-compliant cases in order to identify the reasons for non-compliance; in 84 cases (93%), the required frequency of visitation was described in the case plan. In the remaining six cases, the frequency of visitation was not described in the case plan; in two of those six cases, reviewers found that frequency between the parent and child did occur at a frequency that was consistent with the professional judgement of the reviewer.

### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a second-level review of the thirteen cases where DCYF found that visits between the parents and the child occurred at the frequency indicated in the case plan, and evaluated whether that visitation did occur; in each of the thirteen cases, PCG verified that visits between the siblings occurred at the required frequency.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for 103 of the 1,030 eligible cases statewide (representing ten percent of the statewide universe); this sample is statistically valid at a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of error of  $\pm 10.1$  percent. PCG's second level review of the thirteen "successful" cases was not a random sample, and the statistical validity of that sample was not calculated.

## DOMAIN #7: LICENSING

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 7 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to non-kinship foster homes into which children are placed have been appropriately licensed; that background checks are conducted for all members of a prospective foster home who are age 18 or older; that kinship foster home license applications are completed in a timely manner; and that background checks are conducted in a timely manner for all foster homes for which a license is due for renewal and in which a child is placed during the Reporting Period.

Four outcome measures are described in the Settlement Agreement:

- Licensing 7.1:** No child may be placed in a non-kinship home without an active license, unless the placement was made pursuant to an order of the Rhode Island Family Court. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 100 percent of placements into a non-kinship home during the Reporting Period.
- Licensing 7.2:** No child may be placed into a prospective kinship foster home (that is, one where licensure is pending) unless background checks have been conducted for all household members age 18 or older, unless the placement was made pursuant to an order for the Rhode Island Family Court. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 100 percent of placements into a foster home during the Reporting Period where licensure is pending.
- Licensing 7.3:** Kinship foster home licensing applications must be completed within six months of the date of application. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 95 percent of cases where a licensing application was submitted during the Reporting Period.
- Licensing 7.4:** DCYF must conduct background checks for all household members age 18 or older in foster homes within 30 days of the date that the home's licensure renewal is due. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 85 percent of cases where a renewal was due during the Reporting Period.

After attaining the goals described above for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 7 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Licensing 7.1: Licensing of Non-Kinship Placements

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 380 placements into a non-kinship foster home during the Reporting Period. In each of those 380 placements, DCYF identified that the non-kinship foster home was licensed during the entire time the child was placed there during the Reporting Period, resulting in a statewide outcome of 100 percent. This meets the 100 percent threshold described in the Settlement Agreement; as described in the next sections of this report, however, DCYF did not meet the threshold mandated by the Settlement Agreement on the other measures comprising this domain, and will not be subject to exit from Section 7 of the Settlement Agreement in the second Reporting Period, even if they again achieve a 100 percent success rate on this measure.

### Case Reviews

PCG identified a random sample of 100 placements into a non-kinship foster home occurring during the Reporting Period, and conducted a case review in order to verify that the foster home license was active the entire period the child was placed in that home during the Reporting Period. In each of the 100 cases reviewed, PCG found that the foster home license was active the entire timeframe under review.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 380 placements statewide, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 removals/placement changes (representing 18.1 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 11.0$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## Licensing 7.2: Background Checks for Kinship Homes

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 312 placements into a kinship foster home during the Reporting Period where the foster home was pending licensure. In 221 of those 312 placements, DCYF identified that background checks had been conducted for all household members age 18 or older, resulting in a statewide outcome of 70.83 percent. This outcome falls short of the 100 percent threshold described in Section 7.2 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Case Reviews

PCG identified a random sample of 100 placements into a foster home occurring during the Reporting Period where the foster home was pending licensure, and conducted a case review in order to identify whether background checks had been conducted on all household members age 18 or older. In each of the 100 cases reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 312 applicable placements statewide, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 placements (representing 32.1 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 11.2$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## Licensing 7.3: Timely Completion of Kinship License Applications

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

As this measure evaluates DCYF's compliance over a six-month timeframe, measured prospectively from the time each kinship home submits its application for licensure, DCYF and PCG were unable to review licensure applications submitted during the Reporting Period of July – December 2018, since DCYF's timeframe for completing those applications would extend through June 2019.

During the first Reporting Period, DCYF instead identified kinship license applications submitted in May and June 2019, in order to evaluate the successful completion of those applications through the end of the first Reporting Period on December 31, 2018. Future periods' analyses will "lag" one full Reporting Period behind other outcomes measured as a result; that is, when evaluating outcomes for the second

Reporting Period (January-June 2019) DCYF and PCG will examine kinship licensing applications submitted between July-December 2018, which under the terms of the Settlement Agreement must each be completed by June 30, 2019 (the end of the second Reporting Period).

DCYF identified 100 kinship home applications filed in May and June 2018. In 41 of those 100 cases, an order of the Rhode Island Family Court mandated placement with the kinship provided, and were excluded from the analysis. Of the 59 remaining kinship licensing applications, DCYF completed the application within six months for nine applications, resulting in a statewide outcome of 15.25 percent. This falls short of the 95 percent threshold described in Section 7.3 of the Settlement Agreement.

#### Case Reviews

PCG identified a random sample of 50 kinship home applications filed during May – June 2018, and conducted a case review in order to identify whether the application was completed within the six-month timeframe described in Section 7.3 of the Settlement Agreement. In each of the 50 cases reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 59 applicable kinship home applications submitted statewide during May and June 2018, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG did not review a sample of cases, the statistical validity of PCG's case review did not need to be calculated.

### Licensing 7.4: Background Checks within 30 Days of License Renewal

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 73 foster homes where the license was due for renewal during the Reporting Period, and a child was placed in the home during the Reporting Period. For seventeen of those 73 foster homes, DCYF identified that background checks were conducted for all household members age 18 or older within 30 days of the due date for the renewal, and that a home inspection was conducted within 30 days of that same due date. This statewide outcome of 23.29 percent falls short of the 85 percent threshold described in Section 7.2 of the Settlement Agreement.

#### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of all 73 applicable foster homes in order to identify whether background checks had been conducted on all household members age 18 or older, and whether a home inspection had been conducted within 30 days of the license due date. In each of the 73 cases reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

#### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 73 applicable kinship home applications due during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. Similarly, since PCG did not review a sample of cases, the statistical validity of PCG's case review did not need to be calculated.



## DOMAIN #8: CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 8 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which DCYF screens in reports of abuse or neglect in a timely manner; whether they respond to screened-in reports in a timely manner; and whether they complete their investigation of screened-in reports in a timely manner.

Three outcome measures are described in the Settlement Agreement:

- CPS 8.1:** DCYF must make a screening decision within timeframes consistent with Rhode Island statute – 30 minutes for reports designated as having an “emergency” priority level; two hours for reports designated as having an “immediate” priority level; and four hours for reports designated as having a “routine” priority level. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 90 percent of reports received during the Reporting Period.
- CPS 8.2:** For reports of abuse or neglect that are screened in, DCYF must respond to the report by making contact or attempting to make contact with the victim or someone involved in the case within timeframes described by Rhode Island statute – two hours for reports designated as having an “emergency” priority level; twelve hours for reports designated as having an “immediate” priority level; and 48 hours for reports designated as having a “routine” priority level. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 90 percent of screened-in reports received during the Reporting Period.
- CPS 8.3:** For reports of abuse or neglect that are screened in, DCYF must complete the investigation within 30 days of the report, or within 45 days if the investigation is continued due to circumstances beyond the control of DCYF; investigations completed in 31 to 45 days must have supervisor approval documented for the extension. DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 85 percent of screened-in reports received during the Reporting Period.

After attaining each of the goals described above for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 8 of the Settlement Agreement.

### CPS 8.1: Timely Screening Decisions

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 3,924 reports of abuse or neglect that were received during the Reporting Period, excluding those calls that were classified as “Information & Referral.” In 3,786 of those 3,924 reports (96.48%) , DCYF made a screening decision within the timeframes outlined by statute. This statewide outcome exceeds the 90 percent threshold described in Section 8.1 of the Settlement Agreement; as described in the next section of this report, however, DCYF did not meet the threshold mandated by the Settlement Agreement on the other measures comprising this domain, and DCYF will not be eligible to exit from Section 8 of the Settlement Agreement in the second Reporting Period, even if they again achieve successful outcomes in at least 90 percent of reports.

## Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of 100 reports of abuse or neglect received during the Reporting Period in order to verify that the screening decision was made within the timeframe mandated by Rhode Island statute. In each of the 100 reports reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

## Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 3,924 applicable reports of abuse or neglect received during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 reports (representing 2.5 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 9.9$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## CPS 8.2: Timely Face-to-Face Contact within Child

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 3,278 reports of abuse or neglect that were received during the Reporting Period and subsequently screened in for investigation. In 2,549 of those 3,278 reports (77.76%), DCYF made contact with the alleged victim or someone involved in the case or report within the timeframe mandated by DCYF statute. This statewide outcome falls short of the 90 percent threshold described in Section 8.2 of the Settlement Agreement.

## Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of 100 reports of abuse or neglect received during the Reporting Period which were screened in by DCYF in order to verify that contact was made within the mandated timeframe. In each of the 100 reports reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

## Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 3,278 applicable reports of abuse or neglect received during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 screened-in reports (representing 3.1 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 9.9$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## CPS 8.3: Timely Completion of Investigation

### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

As described in the previous section, DCYF identified 3,278 reports of abuse or neglect that were received during the Reporting Period and subsequently screened in for investigation. In 2,765 of those 3,278 reports (84.35%), DCYF completed the investigation within the timeframe mandated by Rhode Island statute. Of the 2,765 investigations completed within a timely manner, 2,435 were completed within 30 days, and another 330 were completed within 45 days, and supervisor approval and reason for the extension of the investigation was documented. This statewide outcome of 84.35 percent falls short of the 85 percent threshold described in Section 8.3 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Case Reviews

PCG conducted a case review of 100 reports of abuse or neglect received during the Reporting Period which were screened in by DCYF in order to verify that the investigation was completed within the timeframe provided by DCYF. In each of the 100 reports reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

### Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 3,278 applicable reports of abuse or neglect received during the Reporting Period, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG's case review of 100 screened-in reports (representing 3.1 percent of the statewide universe) is concordant with DCYF's findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 9.9$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## DOMAIN #10: CASE PLANNING

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 10 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is being evaluated on the extent to which DCYF have case plans that meet the timeliness requirements outlined by federal statute, and include the elements that are required under the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (AACWA) of 1980.<sup>2</sup>

Two outcome measures are described in the Settlement Agreement:

**Case Planning 10.2:** DCYF must ensure that children in the legal custody of DCYF have case plans that meet the timeliness requirements enumerated in 42 U.S.C. §670 *et seq.* DCYF must achieve a successful outcome in 80 percent of children served in out-of-home care during the Reporting Period.

**Case Planning 10.3:** Children in out-of-home care during the Reporting Period must have in their case plans the elements required by AACWA. DCYF must draw a random sample of eligible cases to review, and must achieve a successful outcome in 80 percent of reviewed cases.

After attaining the goals described above, as well as the goals described under Sections 6.3b and 6.4b, for two consecutive six-month periods, DCYF shall exit from monitoring under Section 10 of the Settlement Agreement.

### Case Planning 10.2: Timeliness of Case Plans

#### Review of Universe Syntax and Statewide Outcome

DCYF identified 2,177 children served in out-of-home care during the Reporting Period. Of those, 124 children were not in care for at least sixty days during the Reporting Period, and were excluded from the measure. DCYF reviewed the remaining 2,053 cases and found that in 264 cases (12.86%), the child had a case plan that met the timeliness requirements dictated by statute – specifically, that the initial case plan was completed within 60 days of the child’s removal from the home, or had been updated at least every six months following the initial plan. This falls short of the 80 percent threshold described in Section 4.1 of the Settlement Agreement.

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<sup>2</sup> 42 U.S.C. §675(1) requires that case plans include a description of the type of setting in which a child will be placed, including a discussion of the safety and appropriateness of the placement; a plan for ensuring that the child receives safe and proper care and that the child, their parents and their foster parents receive appropriate services to facilitate reunification or permanent placement; the health and educational status of the child; a written description of transitional services to be provided to children 14 years of age or older; the steps being taken for children with a goal of adoption or placement in another permanent home to find a permanent living arrangement for the child; the steps taken on behalf of children with a goal of relative placement to determine the unsuitability of a reunification or adoption and why relative placement is in the child’s best interest; and a plan for ensuring the educational stability of the child while in out-of-home care.

## Case Reviews

PCG identified a random sample of 100 children served during the period for whom DCYF found that the case plan had been updated in a timely manner (i.e., “successful” cases), and conducted a case review in order to verify that the case plan was created or updated within the timeframe described by DCYF. In each of the 100 cases reviewed, PCG found that the outcome reported by DCYF (whether it indicated a successful case or a non-compliant case) was accurate.

## Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for all 2,053 eligible cases statewide, and the statistical validity of those results did not need to be calculated. PCG’s case review of 100 case plans rated as a “success” (representing 37.9 percent of the statewide universe of successful cases) is concordant with DCYF’s findings with a margin of error of  $\pm 10.0$  percent at a 95 percent confidence interval.

## Case Planning 10.3: Case Plan Required Elements

### Review of Sampling Syntax and Statewide Sample

DCYF pulled a random sample of 190 cases of children in care at any point during the first three months of the period. This random sample was stratified by DCYF Region, and each case was reviewed by a member of the DCYF Quality Review (QR) team in order to evaluate whether the case plan includes all of the elements required by AACWA.

This methodology excluded children entering care during the final three months of the period; while PCG agrees with DCYF’s decision to exclude from the sample those children who were not in care long enough for a case plan to be developed during the period, the timeframe for developing that case plan is sixty days. DCYF has agreed in future Reporting Periods to include all children served through the first four months of each Reporting Period, rather than the first three months.

Of the 190 cases, nine cases (4.74%) were found to include all elements required by AACWA. This outcome falls short of the 80 percent threshold described in Section 6.2 of the Settlement Agreement.

## Case Reviews

PCG conducted a second-level review of each of the nine cases identified by the DCYF Quality Review team as having included all required elements in order to independently evaluate whether the case plans contained all of the required elements. In each of the nine cases reviewed, PCG arrived at the same case rating as the DCYF Quality Review team.

## Statistical Validity of Samples

DCYF evaluated outcomes for 190 of the 1,751 eligible cases statewide (representing 10.85 percent of the statewide universe); this sample is statistically valid at a 95 percent confidence interval with a margin of error of  $\pm 7.5$  percent. PCG’s second level review of the nine successful cases was not a random sample, and was not statistically valid.

## DOMAIN #11: MALTREATMENT IN CARE

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 11 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is required to conduct an annual assessment of substantiated report of abuse or neglect occurring during the year, including those occurring to a child who was placed in an unlicensed kinship setting. The report will identify any systemic factors that may have contributed to the abuse/neglect, and DCYF is required to make this report publicly available, including the results of the assessment of substantiated reports, as well as recommendations for corrective actions recommended to ensure the safety of children in foster care.

DCYF's report summarizing its findings from federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 has been published by DCYF on its website<sup>3</sup> as the *Annual Safety Analytic Report (FFY 18)*.

DCYF will continue to conduct and publish this annual assessment until it exits from the terms of Sections 1-10 of the Settlement Agreement.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/data-evaluation/safety-data-reports.php>

## DOMAIN #12: FOSTER HOME ARRAY

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### Summary of Domain

Under the terms of Section 12 of the Settlement Agreement, DCYF is required to develop an annual recruitment and retention plan for foster homes. Under the terms of Section 12, this recruitment and retention plan must include specific targets regarding the number of foster homes to be recruited, including sub-targets for specific populations such as adolescents, as well as populations with special needs such as children with disabilities and medically fragile children. It will also include retention strategies geared toward reducing attrition among foster care providers, such as respite homes, enhanced training opportunities for foster parents and increased visitation with foster parents.

Following the publication of its first recruitment plan, DCYF must in subsequent years conduct an assessment of its implementation of the strategies outlined in the previous year's plan in order to gauge its progress in meeting the goals described in the report, and identify any systemic barriers that may have contributed to shortfalls in meeting the recruitment or retention goals. This assessment will also include recommendations for corrective actions that may be required to ensure sufficient recruitment and retention of foster homes under the terms of the plan.

DCYF's report summarizing its findings from state fiscal year (FY) 2018-2019 has been published by DCYF on its website<sup>4</sup> as the *FY 2019 Resource Family Recruitment Plan Reflection Summary*.

DCYF will continue to conduct and publish this annual report until it exits from the terms of Sections 1-10 of the Settlement Agreement.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/news/>